

A RESOLUTION
BY COUNCIL MEMBER CLAIR MULLER

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A RESOLUTION URGING THE 2001 GEORGIA GENERAL
ASSEMBLY TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION AMENDING THE
GEORGIA CODE TO ALLOW MUNICIPALITIES AND COUNTIES
WITHIN THE STATE OF GEORGIA TO BAND TOGETHER IN
NEGOTIATING CABLE FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS

WHEREAS, consolidation within the cable television industry has left most Georgia communities with only one cable service provider; and

WHEREAS, such consolidation can be a barrier for new programmers resulting in fewer choices in programming for Georgia consumers; and

WHEREAS, there are significant societal benefits, especially the freedom of speech, in having multiple providers of programming services because a cable television provider contrails much of the programming available to its subscribers; and

WHEREAS, competition in the cable television industry will encourage availability of a wider array of ideas and information, better rates, and improved services for Georgia consumers; and

WHEREAS, rates for cable service continue to increase across the country; and

WHEREAS, in response to this trend, a number of states have passed law to allow two or more municipalities to jointly negotiate cable franchise agreements; and

WHEREAS, by allowing municipalities to band together and negotiate as a team, localities have more leverage over terms of the agreements, particularly concerning rates.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA that, because it is in the best interest of the public and the consumers to further competition in the cable television industry within the state of Georgia, the City of Atlanta requests the Georgia State Legislature to amend the Georgia Code to allow two or more bordering counties and municipalities to band together in negotiating or renegotiating cable franchise agreements, so as to promote the availability of diverse views and information, to ensure cable service providers expand their capacity and program offerings, and to ensure cable service providers do not have undue market power or undue influence over the distribution of information.